

1. A method for use with an assembly line of the type having a plurality of installers and an item which is to receive at least one component from each of said plurality of installers, said method comprising the step of:

notifying each of said plurality of installers of said existence of said item and said type of said item when said item enters said assembly line.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said item comprises a portion of a vehicle.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

remotely locating some of said components from said assembly line; and
retrieving at least a portion of said remotely located components in response to said notification.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of notifying said installers comprises the step of visually notifying said installers.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein said step of visually notifying said installers comprises the steps of:

creating a visual representation of said assembly line; and
displaying an icon upon said visual representation.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein said visual representation comprises a computer screen.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein said member traverses various locations upon said assembly line and wherein said icon is displayed upon said computer screen at a position corresponding to a current location of said item.

8. A method of manufacturing an item using an assembly line having a plurality of operators wherein said item incorporates at least one component from each of a plurality of said operators, comprising:

identifying to a computer system a first portion of said item by automatically reading a first information tag associated with said first portion;
automatically determining the location of said first portion; recording said location of said first portion in said computer system; automatically identifying to said computer system at least one component to be added to said first portion; automatically reading a second information tag associated with said component; transmitting information from said second tag to said computer; incorporating said component into said first portion;
identifying to said computer system that said component has been incorporated into said item; and
displaying said identification to at least one operator.

9. The method of claim wherein said item comprises a portion of a vehicle.

10. The method of claim 8 further comprising the steps of:
remotely locating components from said assembly line;
automatically determining when said components are required by said manufacturing process; and
automatically notifying a supplier that said components are required to be supplied to a manufacturing line.

11. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of notifying operators comprises providing a graphical display.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising:
creating a graphical representation of the status of an assembly line;
displaying an icon on said graphical display representing the status of one first
portion.
13. The method of claim 12 wherein said icon represents the location of said first
portion on said manufacturing line.